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NOVEMBER 20 1958

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FROM: BONN

TO: Secretary of State

NO: 1083, NOVEMBER 20, 9 P.M.

NIACT

SENT DEPARTMENT 1083, REPEATED INFORMATION PRIORITY LONDON 195,
PARIS 296, MOSCOW 112, BERLIN 293.

PARIS FOR EMBASSY AND USRO

LIMIT DISTRIBUTION

RE EMBTEL 1080, NOVEMBER 20.

AFTER INFORMING BRITISH AMBASSADOR AND FRENCH AND U.S. CHARGES OF SMIRNOV-ADENAUER CONVERSATION THIS MORNING, VON BRENTANO SAID HE ASSUMED SOVIET GOVT WILL SHORTLY NOTIFY OTHER GOVERNMENTS ITS INTENTION TO ABOLISH BERLIN "OCCUPATION STATUTE", AND FOLLOW THIS UP BY PUBLIC DECLARATION ON SUBJECT. WHILE THERE IS OF COURSE NO OCCUPATION STATE UTE SOVIET WILL SAY SO FOR PROPAGANDA PURPOSES. NEXT SOVIET WILL PRESUMABLY ASSERT AT AS FOUR POWER CONTROL NO LONGER IN EFFECT, GDR WILL EXERCISE AUTHORITY HITHERTO HELD BY SOVIETS, NOT AS AGENT BUT IN OWN RIGHT AS SOVEREIGN STATE. THESIS, WILL THEN BE ADVANCED THAT WHILE PART OF "GERMANY" BERLIN IS SITUATED IN GDR. THEREFORE ANYTHING AFFECTING BERLIN MUST BE DISCUSSED WITH GDR. FOR EXAMPLE, IN TWO OR THREE WEEKS SOVIETS MAY WELL STATE THAT AS ALL TRAFFIC TO AND FROM BERLIN PASSES THROUGH GDR TERRITORY, LATTER NATURALLY HAS RIGHT CONTROL IT.

N BRENTANO'S VIEW SOVIETS WILL PROCEED BY SLOW AND CAUTIOUS STEPS, THUS MAKING IT DIFFICULT TO AROUSE WEST PUBLIC OPINION

AGAINST ANY ONE OF

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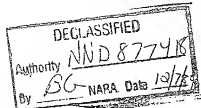
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- 2 - 1083. NOVEMBER 20, 9 PM FROM BONN

AGAINST ANY ONE OF THEM. UNLIKE SITUATION 1948 SOVIETS WILL NOT REPEAT NOT RESORT TO "BRUTAL" MEASURES BUT RATHER SEEK BY GRADUAL MOVES TO FORCE WEST TO NEGOTIATE WITH GDR. BRENTANO FELT BERLIN BECOMING A TEST OF WESTERN POLICY AND FIRST TALK WEST POWERS HAVE WITH GDR WILL BE END OF POLICY WE HAVE BEEN FOLLOWING. HE GREATLY CONCERNED AND PERSONALLY REGARDS SITUATION AS VERY DANGEROUS. WE HAVE REACHED END OF CHAPTER, AND WE MUST NEVER FORGET THAT ATTITUDE THREE WEST POWERS DISPLAY TOWARD BERLIN CONSTITUTES YEARSTICK BY WHICH THEIR STEADFASTNESS MEASURED GENERALLY. UNILATERAL ACTION OF SOVIET IN ABOLISHING FOUR POWER AGREEMENT CANNOT BE ACCEPTED. ANY WILLINGNESS ON PART OF WEST TO DEAL WITH GDR WOULD MEAN SURRENDER TO SOVIET AND BE INTERPRETED AS SUCH IN WORLD OPINION. (BRENTANO AVOIDED SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO TRIPARTITE DEMARCHE (EMBTTEL 1071, NOV. 19) BUT IT SEEMED QUITE OBVIOUS FROM HIS COMMENTS THAT HE HAD BEEN INFORMED THEREOF AND DISLIKED STEPS ENVISAGED).

AT THIS POINT U.K. AMBASSADOR HANDED FONMIN COPY BRITISH MEMORANDUM SUMMARIZED DEPTTEL 1012. BRENTANO READ IT CAREFULLY AND VISIBLY FOUND IT MOST DISTASTEFUL. I SAID THAT I HAD ALREADY SEEN SUMMARY OF PAPER AND WITH DUE DEFERENCE MY BRITISH COLLEAGUE DISAGREED WITH VARIOUS POINTS IN IT AND IN PARTICULAR WITH ASSUMPTION ON WHICH IT APPEARED BASED THAT EVERY MOVE SOVIETS MIGHT TAKE WOULD BE SUCCESSFUL AND WEST POWERLESS. FOR EXAMPLE, PAPER SEEMS TO IGNORE VALUE ECONOMIC COUNTERMEASURES AGAINST GDR AND I URGED FEDREP GIVE SERIOUS CONSIDERATION THEIR USE.

STEELE SAID BRITISH MEMORANDUM MERELY PUT FORTH DISCUSSION PURPOSES AND AGREED WITH ME AS DID BRENTANO AND FRENCH CHARGE ECONOMIC RETALIATION BY FED REP MIGHT WELL SERVE USEFUL PURPOSE.

AS EXAMPLE STRENGTH GERMAN FEELING BERLIN ISSUE, BRENTANO SAID THAT BUNESTAG PRESIDENT GERSTEINMIER AT RECENT CDU FRACTION MEETING ADVOCATED BREAK DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS IN EVENT SOV TRANSFER AUTHORITY TO GDR.

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- 3 - 1082, NOVEMBER 20, 9PM FROM BONN

FON MIN STATED HE ORDERING HOME FOR CONSULTATION GER AMBASSADORS WASHINGTON, LONDON AND PARIS. HE ADDED THAT "IF SOMETHING SHOULD HAPPEN IN BERLIN", HE WOULD PROPOSE IMMEDIATE MEETING THREE WEST FOREIGN MINISTERS AND HIMSELF IN LONDON, PARIS OR WASHINGTON.

BRENTANO CONCLUDED CONVERSATION BY REITERATING THAT ANY CONCESSION TO GDR WOULD BE VERY DANGEROUS. BERLIN WILL BE A TEST CASE AND ANY WEAKNESS "WOULD EVENTUALLY LEAD TO CATASTROPHE FOR WEST".

TRIMBLE

JB/23

NOTE: Advance copy to Mr. Hillenbrand (GER) 6:30 p.m. 11/20/58 EH

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